Ministry of Agriculture

# Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

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Log Number: 08-16-67
Week of April 14, 2008

## CROPS IMPORTANT TO DIABETES PREVENTION

Ag-West Bio Inc. is presenting a conference on Metabolic Syndrome on April 24 and 25 in Saskatoon that can help health care professionals, nutritionists, agricultural producers and the public understand the factors that contribute to and prevent or delay the onset of and/or manage diabetes and other chronic digestive disorders.

The two-day event is the second of Ag-West Bio's Improving Human Health series. Among the event sponsors is the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

Nutrition, and therefore agriculture, plays an important role in human health and quality of life. Saskatchewan is home to more than 40 per cent of Canada's arable land. As a result, according to Dr. Lisette Mascarenhas, Vice-President of Health and Nutrition for Ag-West Bio, the province is playing a major role in the production of high quality crops, including wheat, canola, pulses, flax and mustard. Saskatchewan's processing capabilities can support the development of various value-added products for human consumption.

Consumption of whole grains and limiting the use of over-processed refined foods goes a long way towards enhancing health and preventing disease. Dr. Abdul Jalil, Director of Agriculture Research with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, said "Nutrition is an important source of human health. Improper nutrition, along with other critical factors could lead over time to health problems, including the metabolic syndrome."

Metabolic syndrome is a condition categorized by obesity, hypertension and disturbed glucose, and insulin metabolism. This syndrome is also linked to increased risk of Type 2 diabetes.

Mascarenhas says more than 47,000 people in Saskatchewan have been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, with a further one-third unaware they have the condition.

The health care burden of treating Type 2 diabetes is enormous, globally. Diabetes-related costs in Canada were about $13.2 million in 2005. "Chronic diseases place a significant burden on the Canadian population, and also on our health budget," he stated.

The Improving Human Health Workshop highlights the factors that contribute to metabolic syndrome, and the different approaches and therapies available to prevent and manage this disease, such as natural health products, functional foods, exercise and portion control. According to global diabetes experts, approximately 80 per cent of Type 2 diabetes can be prevented.

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The keynote speaker is best-selling author and nutritionist Leslie Beck of Canada AM. In addition, over a dozen healthcare professionals, scientists, researchers and industry leaders will cover topics ranging from disease management to industry solutions. The conference wraps up with an alternative therapy workshop on Laughter Yoga, presented by Regina's Jayne Clendening.

The Improving Human Health II Workshop on Metabolic Syndrome takes place April 24 and 25 at the Delta Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon. The public is welcome to attend. Registration can be arranged by contacting Ag-West Bio Inc. at (306) 975-1939 or visiting the agency's website at www.agwest.sk.ca. The standard registration fee is $157.50 per person for both days. Group rates can be discussed with the project co-ordinator.

With its examination of scientific research and development, nutrition, exercise, business practices and the regulatory environment, the Improving Human Health II Workshop offers a broad range of topics relevant to chronic metabolic diseases. The ultimate goal is to highlight the combinations of activities and lifestyle to achieve personalized and preventative health care for everyone.

"We believe that prevention and management using functional, quality food that we produce will help decrease the economic burden on the health care system, and will help to improve the quality of life for those who consume Saskatchewan agricultural products," said Jalil.

"The agriculture industry plays a role in improving human health. We need this idea to be promoted and to help people understand the link between nutrition and health."

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## FARRIER PROFESSION A CAREER OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Today, many people only identify horseshoes with the game played during summer get-togethers across Saskatchewan. But there are still a few people plying the craft of horseshoes as it was originally intended centuries ago.

Farriers apply a broad knowledge that involves aspects of horse health and nutrition, as well as activity and function. Within the profession, they encounter a variety of situations and conditions for which they are trained, but much of their work is based on an art they develop from ongoing experience.

Todd Bailey, a farrier from Vanscoy, has 18 years of experience in the profession. He received his training at Montana State University in Bozeman on a 12-week course. In his early days, he worked with other farriers, including Laurie Tonita and Abe Powell, before venturing out on his own.

The Saskatchewan community of farriers is small. "In the Saskatoon area, there are only two working full-time at the profession, with another two part-time," Bailey said. "Work is easy to find. There aren't a lot of us. Anywhere in the province you find a farrier, the area could use an extra one."

Bailey works mostly in the Saskatoon region, but he also ventures out to Swift Current every six to eight weeks. There are a couple stables where horses are brought to him so that he is able to work more efficiently.

It is difficult for Bailey to pinpoint the total number of horses in his care, because some animals he sees more regularly than others. His estimate, however, is more than 400 animals.

Farrier work involves a science of angles and proportions. "When the hoof gets too long, it's always going to get a little out of balance and distorted," Bailey explained. "When you go to work on a horse, you're trying to get it back as close to balance as you can."

Regular hoof maintenance is important to a horse's mobility and performance. During the summer, hooves need trimming every six to eight weeks. Over the winter, growth slows because the horse's nutrition and energy is spent keeping the animal warm.

Farriers work with either hot or cold shoes. The advantage of hot shoes is that they are more malleable and adjustable. Heat also optimizes the fit. "If it's still got a black heat so that you can set it on a horse's hoof, it'll take out any high spots and get a good seal to the hoof," said Bailey.

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Cold shoeing requires fewer tools, and is a technique convenient for single animals with regular hooves. If Bailey is working on several animals at once, however, he always fires up the forge.

Different types of shoes suit a variety of equine activities. For a barrel racing horse, a farrier would use a rim shoe because it provides traction. For a reining horse that must make sliding stops and spins, the shoe has a sliding plate. In addition, the farrier grinds down the nail heads to make the surface even smoother. Show horses wear weighted shoes and pads to accentuate their gaits. For every equine activity, there is a different type of shoe.

The full farrier courses offered closest to Saskatchewan are in Olds, Alberta, and Langley, British Columbia. There are also clinics offered throughout the Prairies that Bailey attends to brush up on his knowledge.

Further along the line of professional development is the American Farrier's Association, which offers varying levels of certification. Although certification is not mandatory, Bailey notes that it is desirable for credibility.

To become certified, farriers write an exam that tests their knowledge. There is a practical component where the farrier's shoeing technique is evaluated, as well.

From form and function to anatomy and physiology, there is a lot to learn when training to become a farrier. Upon graduation, farriers are ready to work – but as much as they learn in the classroom, Bailey notes that they learn so much more on the job and by attending clinics.

Bailey is a strong advocate of professional development and ongoing training. He intends to seek certification from the AFA and believes in the importance of attending regular clinics.

"If you go to clinics, you see lots of different things," he said. "If you think you are on the right track with your own techniques, it'll steer you the right way or point you in a different direction. It'll definitely help you out."

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## RECORD PRICES INCREASE IMPORTANCE OF BIN MONITORING

With canola prices hitting record levels in recent months, the cost of failing to monitor the crop stored in your bins can be great.

With spring temperatures starting to rise, the Canola Council of Canada is urging producers to check their stored canola for signs of deterioration.

That small effort can save big dollars. A 4,000-bushel bin of canola, for example, could be worth as much as $50,000.

"We are concerned that, as temperatures start to rise through April and May, reports of spoilage and seed damage will also increase," said Canola Council of Canada agronomy specialist David Vanthuyne. "That sort of quality loss doesn't need to happen."

Vanthuyne explains that, in spring, when the sun warms the outside of the bin, warm air moves up near the outside wall of the bin and down through the centre of the grain mass. The cooler canola in the centre of the bin re-absorbs moisture, creating a damp and warm area prone to rapid spoilage.

"That's when you need to monitor the seed more regularly," Vanthuyne stated. "This area of the bin can favour the growth of storage moulds, and eventually, the seed may become damaged."

Aeration is the most effective way to stabilize temperature and moisture within a bin. At the very least, Vanthuyne advises growers to take out some of the canola from the centre of the bin. "That way, you will interrupt any increase in temperature and moisture in the central core," he noted.

Vanthuyne, who is based in eastern Saskatchewan, says, if moisture and temperature are properly maintained, it is possible to store quality canola seed for two to three years.

"The best approach is to stabilize the bin temperature at between 10 to 15 degrees Celsius as summer approaches," he stated. This becomes even more critical with large storage structures, which tend to be at greater risk from heating.

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For more information on canola storage and many other topics related to the oilseed crop, visit the Canola Council of Canada website at www.canola-council.org.

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## OGEMA TRADESHOW "GOES GREEN"

The Town of Ogema will witness a population explosion of sorts when an estimated 700 to 800 people attend the bi-annual Ogema Tradeshow April 18 and 19.

According to Mayor Wayne Myren, the chairman of the Ogema Economic Development Committee, one of the highlights of this year's event is the focus on environmental sustainability.

"There are a lot of rural people who want to know what's going on, how to recycle, and what they can do to help the environment," Myren said. "We thought going green could be a good start to a process that we could build on."

Exhibitors have been encouraged to showcase their most environmentally friendly products. Myren says the idea has been popular. Some companies, such as motor vehicle and implement dealers, will be bringing hybrid vehicles and products that operate on bio-fuels.

A new component of the show is the speakers' bureau. In sessions offered to the public, participants will hear from David Roark, a large-scale agricultural producer from Manitoba who employs sustainability practices. As well, Craik mayor Rod Haugerud will talk about his town's efforts to become a zero-waste community. He will also discuss the evolution of the Craik Eco-Centre.

To encourage a broad spectrum of tradeshow attendees to think about environmental sustainability, organizers have arranged a contest for seniors and youth. Entrants will attempt to develop the best exhibit on what familiar products from the past can now be made with recycled products, and the benefits that would be associated with that activity.

The aspect of community has long been an important theme to the Ogema Tradeshow. The show organizers are a team of volunteers, with Mayor Myren as the chairman and Dawna Mellon as the manager.

The organizers are also cognizant of the community beyond Ogema, ranging from Weyburn to Assiniboia, Regina to the United States border. The town of 310 regularly receives over 700 visitors to the tradeshow, and understands the importance of inter-municipal co-operation. The nearby Town of Radville also hosts a tradeshow.

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"All our communities try to work together, so, with Radville, we have an unwritten understanding that they'll do it one year, and we'll do the next," Myren said. "We were the only two communities doing tradeshows for years, but now other communities are getting involved in it."

Exhibitor registrations are not yet complete, but the 2006 edition of the Ogema Tradeshow featured 105 displays from exhibitors as far away as British Columbia, Alberta and the northern United States. According to Myren, no businesses wanting to participate will be turned away.

The Ogema Tradeshow runs on Friday, April 18 from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday, April 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The event wraps up with a cabaret featuring entertainment by Parallel 49.

For more information, visit the "Events" section of the Town of Ogema website at www.ogema.ca or contact Dawna Mellon at (306) 459-2547.

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